

FAX RECEIVED**AUG 26 2003****GROUP 3600**Claim Amendments

Claim 1 (currently-amended). A method for transferring an article, in particular a nuclear fuel element, the method which comprises:

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providing a fluid-filled first vessel and a fluid-filled second vessel, the interiors of the vessels connected by a connecting element, the connecting element having a first part facing the first vessel and a second part facing the second vessel; and a transport device for moving the article through the connecting element;

maintaining a first fluid flow out of the first vessel into the first part of the connecting element;

maintaining a second fluid flow flowing out of the second vessel in a second part of the connecting element; and

transporting the article through the connecting element with the first and second fluid flows being maintained.

Claim 3 (previously-amended). The method according to claim 1, which further comprises:

providing a first opening of the connecting element in the first vessel and a second opening of the connecting element in the second vessel; and

setting an essentially identical static pressure before the first fluid flow and the second fluid flow are generated.

Claim 4 (original). The method according to claim 1, which further comprises:

discharging fluid from the connecting element.

Claim 5 (original). The method according to claim 4, which further comprises:

supplying fluid to one of the vessels with a flow intensity while discharging a fluid with the same flow intensity from the connecting element.

Claim 6 (original). The method according to claim 4, which further comprises:

supplying a fluid to the first vessel at a first flow intensity and to the second vessel with a second flow intensity; and

discharging the fluid from the connecting element with an extraction flow intensity that corresponds to a sum of the first and the second flow intensities.

Claim 7 (original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the article is a nuclear fuel element, the first vessel is a reactor pit of a nuclear power station, and the second vessel is a fuel element storage pond of the nuclear power station.